

**BARNARD CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
(Convened in accordance with Council Minute 22(c)/May/13)**

17 JUNE 2013

PRESENT:- Councillor Harrison (Town Mayor) (in the Chair); Councillors Blissett, Cooke, Deacon, Mrs Grady, Hinchcliffe, Kinch, Mrs Moorhouse (Minutes 27 to 29 inclusive), Peat, Robinson, Watson and Yarker.

Also in attendance:- Mr Hallimond (Minutes 24 to 26 inclusive) and Mrs Moorhouse (Minutes 24 to 26 inclusive).

Officers:- Mr King (Town Clerk) and Mrs Plant (Assistant Clerk).

24. ACCEPTANCE, OR OTHERWISE OF APOLOGIES: None.

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with this Council's adopted Code of Conduct (Minute 72(a)/Sep/12 refers), Members were asked whether they had any personal, pecuniary or prejudicial interests in any matter on the agenda and, if so, to declare those interests at this point of the meeting. Members were reminded that a declaration could be given later in the meeting if a need arose during discussion.

Councillor Kinch declared a non-pecuniary, but potentially prejudicial interest in item 26, by virtue of 'membership or management of other bodies', having submitted a formal request for dispensation to vote upon the matter, under S.33 of the Localism Act (2011).

Resolved – That Cllr Kinch be granted dispensation to participate in the debate and vote on item 26, for the duration of the meeting.

26. EAST WARD VACANCY

Submitted – A report outlining a process by which members might consider the expressions of interest received in response to the advertisement of a vacancy on the Town Council for co-option and vote to fill the vacancy. Letters from the candidates were attached to the report.

Mr Hallimond and Mrs Moorhouse were present at the meeting and were invited to speak on their suitability. Members were offered the opportunity to question both candidates. It was then **resolved** to proceed directly to a secret ballot.

Each Member present was then handed a slip of paper to record his/her vote for the East Ward vacancy. The Town Mayor and the Clerk acted as adjudicators on the counting of the votes, the following result then being announced by the Town Mayor:-

Candidate	Votes
Mr George Hallimond	4
Mrs Sandra Moorhouse	7

Resolved – (a) That Mrs Moorhouse be co-opted to fill the current East Ward vacancy on the Council.

(b) That Mr Hallimond be thanked for his interest in the vacancy.

Councillor Mrs Moorhouse then signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

27. AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2012/13

Submitted – A report confirming that this Council's accounts for the financial year 2012/13 had been examined and approved by this Council's Internal Auditor and consequently approval was sought to Section 1 (Accounting statement) and Section 2 (Annual governance statement) of the 2012/13 Annual Return. The report also outlined the remaining stages of the process, leading to the final submission of the Annual Return to the External Auditor by 25 June 2013. The accounts had to be approved by the External Auditor by 30 September 2013. A copy of the Internal Auditor's report was also circulated for Members' information.

Resolved – (a) That the content of the Internal Auditor's report be noted.
(b) That Sections 1 and 2 of the 2012/13 Annual Return, as now submitted, be approved

28. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (IN RESPECT OF MINUTE 29 BELOW)

Resolved – That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter referred to at Minute 29 below on the grounds that they might involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Parts 1, 3 and 4 of Schedule 12A of the said Act.

29. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION

NOTE – Prior to the consideration of this item, Members had been given the opportunity to view the building in question.

Submitted – A report outlining a potential new office accommodation and meeting space rental option, including details of the likely overall annual costs, the associated budgetary impact and overall benefits, in respect of an immediate medium to long-term option. Current accommodation problems were reiterated and the fact that the County Council's intentions over Teesdale House and Woodleigh were still unclear was noted.

Discussion ensued. Reference was made in respect of premises that could accommodate the office as well as full Council meetings that were affordable being found was considered unlikely and concerns were expressed to the recommendation to give the Town Clerk delegated authority to conclude the negotiations.

Resolved – a) That the Town Council approves the negotiation of terms for the lease of Tower View, Scar Top as office accommodation and the consequential termination of the lease for 44b Galgate;
b) That the period of this lease not exceed two years, initially, with a rolling notice period to not exceed one year, thereafter;
c) That, subject to this agreement, notice be given on the currently occupied office: 44b Galgate;
d) That the Town Council approves expenditure from the office relocation funds to cover consequential capital and infrastructure spending to prepare the building and facilitate any move; and
e) That delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Town Mayor, to expedite these negotiations within the sums identified $\pm 15\%$.